

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-17, 19-22, and 24-34 are pending in the present application. Claims 18 and 23 have been canceled. Independent claims 1, 21 and 34 have been amended..

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 21, 22, 28 and 32-33 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Cattaruzza et al. in view of Gotanda et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 21 have been amended to recite that the control of speed and torque is made through a visual control wherein an image is acquired and transformed into signals, these signals being then processed to adjust speed and torque of the rollers. Support for this feature can be found in claims 18 and 23 (now canceled), and in paragraph 47 of the description.

Specifically, claim 1, as amended, recites “an image acquiring device operatively connected to said control and command unit, said image acquiring device constantly monitoring said non-woven fabric in order to detect the presence of creases or variations in the printing with respect to a preset standard, wherein said image acquiring device acquires an image of said non-woven fabric and sends electrical signals representative of said acquired image to said control and command unit, and wherein said control and command unit detects electrical signals originating from said image acquiring device, turns said signals into numerical values representative of the status of their angular speed and torque moment, compares said numerical values with ratios of preset numerical values of said angular speed and said torque moments and sends signals to said support and at least one printing body in order to correct any possible variations in said values which fall out with said ratios.”

The above-described feature of the invention is not disclosed or suggested in any of the cited references. Applicant notes that claim 18, now canceled, drawn to an image acquiring device, was rejected in view of US Patent No. 6,024,018 to Darel et al. However, this prior art patent only relates to the control of the color quality in a printing process, where the acquired image is compared to a standard image in order to adjust the color printing keys. Darel et al. does not disclose or suggest using the acquired image to control speed and torque, and thus the movement of, the support and printing rollers.

Independent claims 1 and 21 as amended therefore define a relationship between the image acquiring device and the command and control unit which distinguishes the invention over the prior art. This visual system of the present invention imparts a substantial improvement to the claimed equipment by optimizing the control of the said parameters in an affordable and punctual way. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore appropriate and respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5-6, 8-9, 15-16, 24-26 and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cattaruzza et al. in view of Gotanda et al. and further in view of Takahashi. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 3, 5-6, 8-9, and 15-16 and claims 24-26 depend from independent claims 1 and 21, respectively, and are patentable over Cattaruzza et al. for at least the reasons mentioned above. Claim 34 contains limitations similar to those of claim 1 and is allowable at least for reasons similar to those discussed above with regard to claim 1. Takahashi, which has been cited as teaching a printer having a driven support provided with through holes which cooperate with holding means, does not cure the deficiencies of Cattaruzza et al. and Gotanda et al. discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 10-14 and 27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cattaruzza et al. in view of Gotanda et al. and Takahashi, and further in view of Deeming. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 10-14 and claim 27 depend from independent claims 1 and 21, respectively, and are patentable over the Cattaruzza et al., Gotanda et al. and Takahashi combination for at least the reasons mentioned above. Deeming, which has been cited as teaching transporting fabric on a belt through which water can be separated by a vacuum, does not cure the deficiencies of Cattaruzza et al. and Takahashi discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 17 and 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cattaruzza et al., Gotanda et al. and Takahashi, and further in view of Kurihara. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 17 and 30 depend from independent claims 1 and 30, respectively, and are patentable over the Cattaruzza et al., Gotanda et al. and Takahashi combination for at least the reasons mentioned above. Kurihara, which has been cited as teaching a widening function, does not cure the deficiencies of Cattaruzza et al. and Takahashi discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 18-20, 23 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cattaruzza et al. in view of Gotanda et al. and further in view of Darel et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 18-20 and claims 23 and 29 depend from independent claims 1 and 21, respectively, and are patentable over Cattaruzza et al. and Gotanda et al. for at least the reasons mentioned above. Darel et al., which has been cited as teaching a printer having an image acquiring device, does not cure the deficiencies of Cattaruzza et al. and Gotanda et al. discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claim 34 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cattaruzza et al. in view of Gotanda et al. and Takahashi. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 34 has been amended to recite the same features as independent claims 1 and 21, and is patentable over Cattaruzza et al. and Gotanda et al. for at least the reasons mentioned above. Takahashi, which has been cited as teaching a printer having a driven support that is provided with through holes, does not cure the deficiencies of Cattaruzza et al. and Gotanda et al. discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and that claim 34 be allowed.

In view of the above, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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